

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

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FOL REPEAT JIDDA 5014 SENT ACTION SECSTATE JULY 13, 1975

QUOTE

S E C R E T JIDDA 5014

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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS BEIRUT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, LE

SUBJECT: MORGAN ABDUCTION

REF: (A) SECTO 06047; (B) JIDDA 4963

SUMMARY: FONMINISTRY INFORMED DCM JULY 13 THAT KING KHALID HAD PREVIOUS DAY INSTRUCTED THAT SAG'S CONCERN FOR COLONEL MORGAN'S WELFARE BE COMMUNICATED TO LEBANESE PRESIDENT FRENJIEH, PRIME MINISTER KARAME, AND TO PLO CHAIRMAN YASER ARAFAT (WHO IN JIDDA). DCM THANKED FORMINISTRY, AND SAID HE BELIEVED USG WOULD PRESENTLY BE EXPRESSING ITS APPRECIATION. AS A RESULT OF SAG

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DEMARCHE AMCITS AND OFFICIALS MAY BE MORE SECURE AGAINST

FEDAYEEN EXTORTION. ACTION REQUESTED: APPROVAL OF LETTER OF THANKS FROM SECRETARY TO KING KHALID.

1. DCM RECEIVED PRELIMINARY BRIEFING FROM FONMIN OFFICIAL EVENING JULY 12 AS TO SAG'S REACTION TO SECRETARY'S APPEAL ON BEHALF OF COLONEL MORGAN; MORE COMPLETE RESPONSE WAS PROVIDED TO DCM BY DIRECTOR OF WESTERN AFFAIRS AMBASSADOR IBRAHIM JULY 13.

2. SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF KING KHALID, CROWN PRINCE FAHD, AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS SAUD BIN FAISAL, AMBASSADOR IBRAHIM SAID SAG CONDEMNED AND DEPLORED THE ABDUCTION OF COLONEL MORGAN AND THE THREAT TO HIS LIFE. KING KHALID HAD MET WITH PRINCE FAHD AND PRINCE SAUD ON THE QUESTION EARLY AFTERNOON OF JULY 12. AND HAD DIRECTED SAUDI AMBASSADOR IN LEBANON TO TELL PRESIDENT FRANGIE AND PRIME MINISTER KARAME OF KING KHALID'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE FATE OF COLONEL MORGAN. AMBASSADOR NURI SAID SAG HAD EXPRESSED SIMILAR SENTIMENTS TO PLO CHAIRMAN YASSIR ARAFAT WHO WAS HEADING PLO'S OBSERVER DELEGATION TO ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTER'S CONFERENCE.

3. AMBASSADOR IBRAHIM HAD HEARD MORNING OF JULY 13 OF COLONEL MORGAN'S RELEASE, AND SUPPOSED THAT RELEASE HAD OCCURRED BEFORE SAG'S ACTIONS COULD HAVE BEEN COMMUNICATED TO PARTIES CONCERNED OR HAD ANY EFFECT. HE WANTED HOWEVER TO LET US KNOW THAT IT HAD BEEN THE SAG'S INTENTION TO BE HELPFUL, AND THAT IT HAD MOVED AS RAPIDLY AS ITS OTHER COMMITMENTS (ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE) AND POOR COMMUNICATIONS HAD PERMITTED.

4. IN PASSING, AMBASSADOR IBRAHIM SAID USG HAD ACTED FIRMLY AND WISELY IN NOT GIVING IN TO ANY OF THE DEMANDS OF THE KIDNAPPERS. THIS WAS VERY MUCH THE SAG'S OWM POLICY, AND HAD BEEN THE POLICY OF KING FAISAL TOWARD ANY FORM OF TERRORIST EXTORTION. IBRAHIM QUOTED THE KING AS ONCE HAVING SAID THAT HE DID NOT CARE WHETHER AN AMBASSADOR, A PRINCE, OR TEN PRINCES WERE HELD TOWARDS RANSOM--HE WOULD NEVER GIVE IN. WITH REGARD TO PRINCES SUCH FIRM-
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NESS WAS ESPECIALLY NECESSARY, KING FAISAL IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE SAID, BECAUSE THEIR NUMBERS AND CONSTANT TRAVEL WOULD MAKE THEM IRRESISTIBLY ATTRACTIVE TO RADICAL KIDNAPPERS.

5. THE DCM TOLD IBRAHIM THAT WHETHER OR NOT THERE HAD BEEN A LINK BETWEEN SAUDI EFFORTS AND THE RELEASE OF COLONEL MORGAN, WE WERE DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO HIS MAJESTY,

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE CROWN PRINCE, PRINCE SAUD, AND TO NURI HIMSELF FOR THE HUMANITARIAN AND ENTIRELY ADMIRABLE POSITION THE SAG HAD TAKEN. HE THOUGHT IT LIKELY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE EXPRESSING ITS DEEP APPRECIATION TO KING KHALID.

6. COMMENT: WHILE THE SAG'S DEMARCHE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN RELEVANT TO COLONEL MORGAN'S RELEASE, ITS DISAPPROVAL OF KIDNAPPING HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR TO YASSIR ARAFAT. BY WAY OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE THEREFORE, THE SAUDI DEMARCHE MAY HELP TO MAKE U.S. OFFICIALS AND CITIZENS MORE SECURE IN THE FUTURE FROM FEDAYEEN VIOLENCE.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE EMBASSY BE AUTHORIZED TO SEND THE FOLLOWING NOTE OF THANKS TO KING KHALID FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER. BEGIN TEXT:

YOUR MAJESTY:

I WISH TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE AND DEEP APPRECIATION AT THE STATESMANLIKE AND HUMANITARIAN POSITION THAT YOUR MAJESTY AND HIGH OFFICIALS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT TOOK IN RESPONSE TO OUR APPEAL ON BEHALF OF COLONEL ERNEST MORGAN. THE FAMILY OF COLONEL MORGAN AND THE COLONEL HIMSELF JOIN ME IN THIS TRIBUTE TO YOUR MAJESTY'S KEEN SENSE OF JUSTICE AND COMPASSION.

I BELIEVE THE VIGOROUS RESPONSE THAT WAS DIRECTED BY YOUR MAJESTY WILL HAVE A HELPFUL EFFECT ON THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE MIDDLE EAST; AS A RESULT OF THESE ACTIONS I BELIEVE ALSO THAT IN THE FUTURE OFFICIALS OF MY COUNTRY AND MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES WILL ENJOY GREATER PERSONAL
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SECURITY.
SINCERELY, HENRY A. KISSINGER. END TEXT. AKINS

UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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